

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LOME 01010 231250 Z

47

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 OMB-01 AID-20 RSR-01 /130 W
----- 010803

R 231016 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY LOME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6317

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L L O M E 1 0 1 0

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, OAU, PFOR, TO, DM, CG

SUBJ: DEPARTURE OF PRESIDENT EYADEMA - OR HOW NOT TO GET
ALONG WITH ONE' S NEIGHBORS

REF: LOME 1005 (NOTAL)

1. SOURCE VERY CLOSE TO PRESIDENT EYADEMA HAS GIVEN ME
FOLLOWING EXPLANATION FOR EVENTS OF YESTERDAY (REFTEL):
WHEN PRESIDENT EYADEMA REALIZED YESTERDAY MORNING THAT AID

ZAIRE CARAVELLE TAKING HIM TO KINSHASA EN ROUTE ADDIS ABABA
WOULD PROCEED FROM LOME TO COTONOU TO PICK UP PRESIDENT
KEREKOU, HE INSISTED PLANE GO FIRST TO COTONOU FOR KEREKOU,
THEN RETURN HERE FOR HIM. DURING LONG WAIT OF OFFICIALS
AND DIPLOMATS AT AIRPORT TO BID HIM FAREWELL, EYADEMA WAS
IN COMMUNICATION WITH KEREKOU BY TELEPHONE, ATTEMPTING TO
PERSUADE KEREKOU TO BOARD AIRCRAFT FIRST. KEREKOU FINALLY
AGREED, PROVIDED HIGH TOGOLESE OFFICIAL FLY TO COTONOU IN
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CARAVELLE TO RECEIVE HIM. OFFICIAL CHOSEN FOR THIS TASK WAS FORMER TOGOLESE MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND STILL SECOND RANKING MILITARY OFFICER IN TOGO, LT COL JAMES ASSILA. (IT WAS IN FACT ASSILA WHO CAME TO AIRPORT IN MORNING TO INFORM ASSEMBLAGE THAT PRESIDENT WAS NOT LEAVING UNTIL AFTERNOON AND WHO TOLD ME HIMSELF THAT DELAY WAS NOT PRESIDENT' S FAULT SINCE AIR ZAIRE PLANE WAS " BROKEN DOWN", ONLY TO HOP ON IT AS SOON AS WE HAD LEFT AIRPORT.)

2. DESPITE KEREKOU' S ASSURANCES, WHEN AIRCRAFT ARRIVED COTONOU, IT WAS REFUSED PERMISSION TO LAND AND HAD NO CHOICE BUT RETURN LOME, AT WHICH POINT EYADEMA BOARDED IT AND SET OF DIRECTLY FOR KINSHASA WITHOUT KEREKOU.

3. PRESS WAS NOT INFORMED OF PRESIDEN' S DEPARTURE UNTIL AFTERWARDS AND NO EXPLANATION FOR THE DELAY HAS APPEARED, ALTHOUGH BIZARRE STORY WILL NO DOUBT SOON BE ALL OVER TOWN. TOGO- PRESSE TODAY, EMPLOYING CRUDELY SUPERIMPOSED PHOTO, REPORTS DEPARTURE AS IF IT HAD PROCEEDED NORMALLY. (PAPER ALSO REPORTS THAT MINISTER OF HEALTH LT COL ALIDOU DJAFALO WILL BE ACTING PRESIDENT DURING EYADEMA' S ABSENCE AND REVEALS PUBLICLY FOR FIRST TIME THAT PRESIDENT WILL MAKE A PRIVATE VISIT OF TEN DAYS TO PARIS AFTER LEAVING ADDIS ABABA.)

4. COMMENT: NO COMMENT *
DICKINSON

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NMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 MAY 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: willialc
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973LOME01010
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: LOME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730553/aaaajsee.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 LOME 1005 (NOTAL)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: willialc
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20-Aug-2001 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <09-Oct-2001 by willialc>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 980304
Subject: DEPARTURE OF PRESIDENT EYADEMA - OR HOW NOT TO GET ALONG WITH ONE'S NEIGHBORS
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Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005